

CRIME

**THE LAW
ALWAYS WINS!**

SMASHERS

JULY, No. 5
10¢

WE FINALLY
FOUND YOUR HIDEOUT,
YOU CROOK. NOW WE'LL
SEND YOU AWAY FOR
A LONG STRETCH!

SPIKE, YOU'RE A DOPE
TO GET CAUGHT! BUT I'VE
GOT THE DROP ON THOSE
COPPER5 - AND I'M
GETTING OUT OF
HERE, SEE ?

THAT'S
WHAT **YOU**
THINK, GIRLIE,
BUT YOU'VE GOT
A BIG SURPRISE
COMING !



featuring:

**SALLY THE SLEUTH
DAN TURNER
GIRL FRIDAY
RAY HALE**

CRIME CAN'T PAY — IN ANY WAY !



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

SALLY the SLEUTH

in "MURDER WEARS A MASK"

ONE DAY, "THE CHIEF," HEAD OF A PRIVATE INVESTIGATION BUREAU, SITS WITH SALLY, HIS BEAUTIFUL BLONDE ASSISTANT, DISCUSSING AN IMPORTANT EVENT OF THE NEAR FUTURE...

DON'T FORGET, SALLY, IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, YOU'RE GOING TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE GRAND JURY IN THE CASE OF NICK MORETTI. THAT GANGSTER AND THUG HAS BEEN OPERATING A TOUGH AND BRUTAL RACKET WHILE THE HEAD OF A LABOR UNION. THIS IS THE KIND OF LOUSE WE'VE GOT TO PUT BEHIND BARS TO PROTECT THE WORKING MAN AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

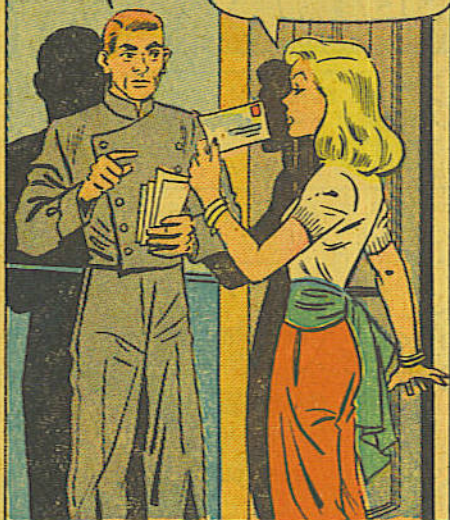
I'LL BE ON HAND, CHIEF. I AGREE WITH YOU -- THESE LABOR RACKETEERS ARE ONLY OUT TO FEATHER THEIR OWN NESTS.



NEXT DAY, AT HOME, SALLY GETS AN UNEXPECTED NOTE...

LETTER FOR YOU, MISS.

WHAT'S THIS? I DON'T RECOGNIZE THE HANDWRITING.



WHY, IT'S A FREE TICKET TO THE BIG BOHEMIAN BALL -- THAT'S TONIGHT!



THAT DAY, AT THE OFFICE...

SORRY, SALLY, BUT I AM TERRIBLY BUSY, I CAN'T TAKE YOU TO THE BALL TONIGHT.

OH, SHUCKS! I NEED A LITTLE RELAXATION, CHIEF!



OUTSIDE, ON THE STREET...

THAT'S A COSTUMER'S SHOP OVER THERE -- I'LL GET A FANCY DRESS AND GO TO THE BALL BY MYSELF!



SALLY ENTERS THE SHOP...

HERE'S A LOVELY COSTUME, MISS, IT'S A HAREM NUMBER AND ONE OF THE NEWEST WE HAVE. YOU'LL LIKE IT.



IT IS BEAUTIFUL! WRAP IT UP. I'LL HIRE IT FOR THE BOHEMIAN BALL TONIGHT.



THAT EVENING, SALLY LEAVES ALONE TO GO TO THE BALL...

TAKE ME TO MOZART HALL, CABBY...

OKAY, MA'AM.



AT THE BALL, A MAN DRESSED AS THE DEVIL SPEAKS TO A GIRL WHO IS ALONE...

HELLO, BEAUTEOUS PEARL OF THE ORIENT. MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?

IF YOU WISH, OH MONARCH OF THE NETHER REGIONS.



YOU'RE A SWELL DANCER, BABE! THIS IS OUR LUCKY EVENING.

YOU'RE NOT SO BAD YOURSELF, MEFISTOFELES.



AS THE DANCE ENDS...

HOW ABOUT A LITTLE REFRESHMENT, HONEY?

SWELL! I'D LOVE IT.



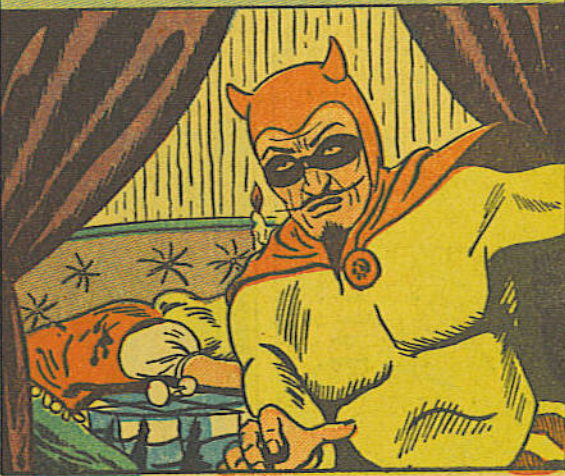
THEY SIT IN A SECLUDED BOOTH...

HERE'S TO YOUR MAJESTY --

--AND HERE'S TO YOU !!



ONE VICIOUS STAB OF HIS KNIFE, AND THE DEVIL JUMPS UP AND VANISHES INTO THE MILLING THROG...



A MOMENT LATER, OTHER GUESTS
LOOK INTO THE BOOTH AND ARE
HORRIFIED AT THE SIGHT...

HERE'S A BOOTH, WE - OH!
EEE-EEEEK!



SOON, THE COPS ARE ON THE SCENE...

SHE'S DEAD,
DENNIS. IT'S
A JOB FOR
THE HOMICIDE
SQUAD.

WE'LL HOLD EVERYBODY HERE.
THEY'RE ALL PRIME SUSPECTS
UNTIL WE NAB THE GUILTY
PARTY. WHO-WHO'S THIS?



A GIRL IN A SIMILAR COSTUME RUSHES IN...

HEY-YOUR RIG IS JUST
LIKE THE DEAD DAME'S!
DO YOU KNOW HER?

NO-BUT IT'S SURE
LUCKY THAT THE
TRAFFIC WAS THICK
AND I GOT HERE
LATE!



SAY, I KNOW YOU.
YOU'RE THAT
PRIVATE SNOOP'S
ASSISTANT,
AREN'T YOU?

YES-AND I
GET THE
ANGLE. SOME-
BODY KNEW
WHAT COSTUME
I PLANNED TO
WEAR, AND
WAS OUT TO
KILL ME!



SALLY HOTFOOTS IT TO THE COSTUMER'S
AND CONFRONTS THE MAN, WHO RECOILS
AND CLUTCHES A HEAVY ASHTRAY...

WHOM DID YOU TELL WHAT DRESS I
HIRED FROM YOU? DON'T LIE TO ME -
YOU'RE THE ONLY
ONE WHO KNEW!

OH YEAH? I DON'T
KNOW FROM NOTHIN'.
I'LL FIX YOU-!!



DON'T TRY TO KID ME! YOU HAD A LOT
TO DO WITH A MURDER TONIGHT.
... DROP THAT!

OUCH!
MY WRIST!

BANG!



COME CLEAN,
YOU RAT, OR
I'LL DRILL
YOU FOR
KEEPS!

ALL RIGHT! ALL
RIGHT! IT WAS
NICK MORETTI.
HE PAID ME TO
TELL HIM WHAT
COSTUME YOU
HIRED.



SALLY THEN QUICKLY
PHONES HER BOSS...

CHIEF, MORETTI'S JUST
HAD A GIRL KILLED,
THINKING IT WAS I.
I'M GOING TO HIS JOINT,
GET THE RIOT SQUAD
AND COME OVER THERE
- BUT FAST !!



WHAT, SALLY? I'M
NOT SURPRISED, BUT
BE CAREFUL. I'LL
GET A BUNCH OF COPS
AND BE RIGHT THERE!



AT MORETTI'S HEADQUARTERS...

THERE GOES THE
BUZZER - WADDA
YA WANT US TO
DO, BOSS?

SEE WHO IT IS, I'M
EXPECTIN' A GUY.



HEY - IT'S A
DEVIL OUT
THERE! WHAT
THE --

YEAH, THAT'S THE JERK
I'M EXPECTIN'. LET HIM
IN - MAKE IT SNAPPY,



IT WAS A CINCH,
NICK. I PICKED HER
UP AT THE DANCE
-- A COUPLE OF
DRINKS, AND **WHAM!**
RIGHT IN THE
GIZZARD!

OKAY, TONY,
THAT'S THE STUFF.
HERE'S YOUR
DOUGH. NOW GET
OUTTA THAT COS-
TUME AND FIX
YOURSELF UP AN
ALIBI - JUST IN CASE -



SUDDENLY, THE BUZZER SOUNDS AGAIN...

IT'S A DAME
OUTSIDE, BOSS.

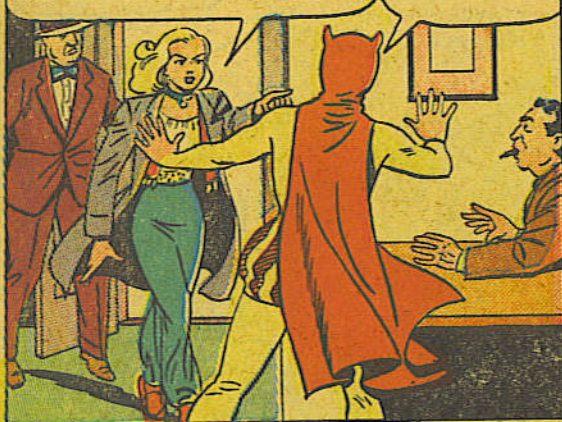
LET HER IN AND SEE
WHAT SHE WANTS.



THE LATCH IS DRAWN AND SALLY ENTERS...

I HEARD THAT, MORETTI!
I WANT YOUR FRIEND
THE DEVIL - FOR MURDER!

HEY-
IT'S -IT'S
HER GHOST!



MORETTI RAGES AT HIS HENCHMAN AS ANOTHER MUGG GRABS A CLOTH AND CREEPS UP BEHIND SALLY...

YOU FOOL! YOU BUMPED THE WRONG DAME. THIS IS THE REAL ONE!



THE CLOTH SWIFTLY ENVELOPS HER...

UGH!
OOF!

GOOD WORK, LUIGI. I'LL
MAKE SURE OF THE JOB
THIS TIME.



LAY OFF THE KNIFE, TONY. WE'LL TAKE
HER DOWN TO THE OLD DOCK AND FIX
HER UP THERE, THEN DUMP THE BODY
IN THE BAY. IT'S
SAFER THAT WAY.

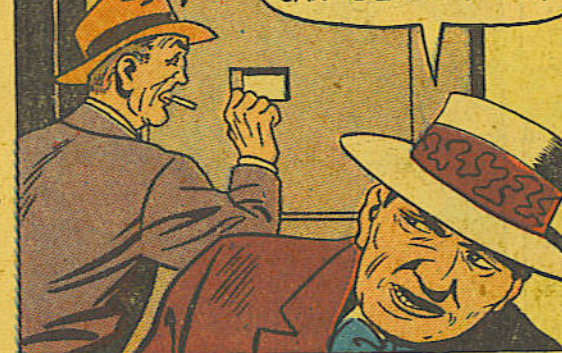
WHATEVER YOU
SAY, BOSS.



A NOISE STARTLES THE GANGSTERS AND ONE OF THEM PEERS THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE IN THE DOOR...

THE COPS!

BEAT IT! WE'VE GOT
TO GET OUT OF HERE
BEFORE DIS DAME
CAN IDENTIFY US!



**THE POLICE, LED BY THE CHIEF, PRO-
CEED TO BREAK THE DOOR DOWN...**

FAST, BOYS, SALLY'S
INSIDE THERE!



THE RACKETEER, MORETTI, PUSHES HIS MEN ASIDE AND GOES THROUGH THE WINDOW TO THE FIRE ESCAPE ...



A MOMENT LATER, THE COPS ARE INSIDE, AND PUT THE MOB UNDER ARREST ...

STAY WHERE YOU ARE!

NOT A MOVE, YOU RATS!

OH, CHIEF!



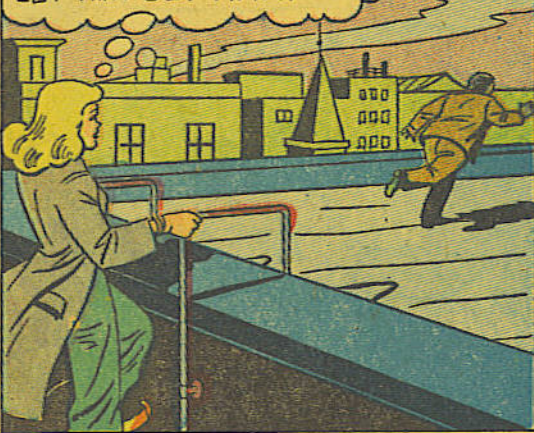
YOU ALL RIGHT, SALLY? I —

SURE, CHIEF, BUT I CAN'T STOP TO TALK NOW. I'M GOING TO GET MORETTI HIMSELF!



ON THE ROOF, SALLY CATCHES SIGHT OF THE FLEEING RACKETEER ...

THERE HE GOES! I CAN'T LET HIM GET AWAY —



HE'S CROSSING TO THE NEXT HOUSE, IF I CAN GET OVER HERE, I'LL HEAD HIM OFF. I HOPE I CAN --



SHE LANDS SAFELY, AND FINDS ...

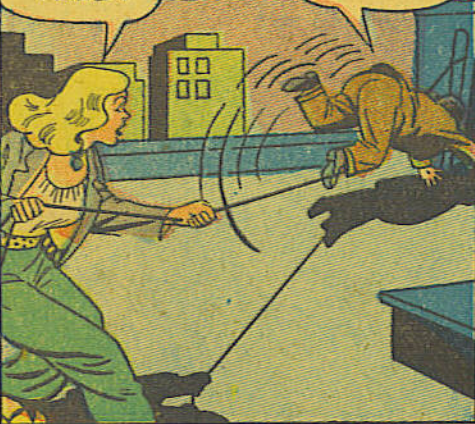
A LOOSE CLOTHESLINE FALLEN TO THE ROOF, AND RIGHT IN HIS PATH! IF THE OTHER END IS FASTENED, I'LL JUST SNAP IT, AND —



HER TRICK WORKS FINE ...

HUMPTY DUMPTY TAKES A BIG FALL!

OW!



GET BACK DOWN THERE, YOU MURDERER! YOUR REIGN OF EVIL IN THIS TOWN IS OVER!



BACK IN THE ROOM WITH THE POLICE, SALLY CALLS ATTENTION TO THE CRINGING DEVIL...

THERE'S THE KILLER OF THAT POOR GIRL! HE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO REMOVE HIS COSTUME, HE WAS SENT BY MORETTI TO KILL ME SO I WOULDN'T TESTIFY AGAINST HIM. BUT THERE WERE TWO SIMILAR COSTUMES AND NOW HE'LL FRY FOR MURDERING THE WRONG GIRL!



NO! NO! MORETTI'S GUILTY! HE HIRED ME TO DO IT! I'LL PROVE IT - I'LL TURN STATE'S EVIDENCE!



MORETTI SNATCHES A GUN FROM A DESK DRAWER...

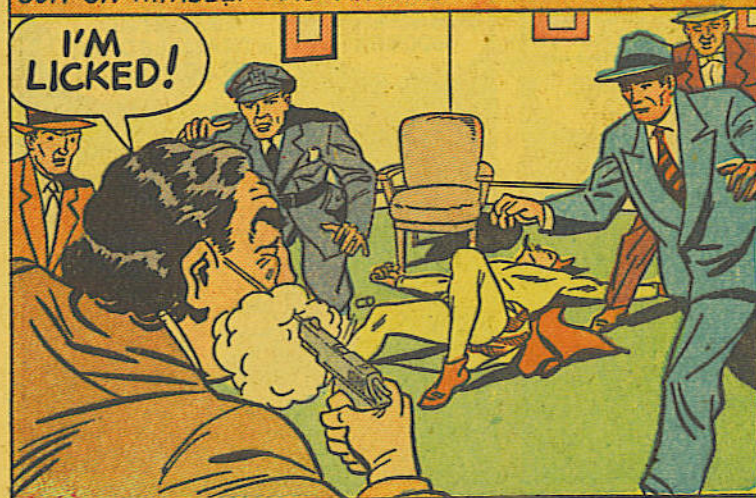
NO YOU WON'T, YOU SQUEALER!

ARR-RGH!



THE DESPERATE RACKETEER THEN TURNS THE GUN ON HIMSELF AND ANOTHER SHOT RINGS OUT...

I'M LICKED!



WELL, CHIEF, IT HAS BEEN A HECTIC EVENING. IT LOOKS LIKE I WON'T HAVE TO GO TO COURT TO GIVE MY TESTIMONY AFTER ALL.



SEE SALLY AGAIN-NEXT ISSUE

Ray HALE

"A NOOSE FOR NEWS"

by
Ken Battefield

WHILE THE NEWSPAPER REPORTER OF THE 'CLARION', RAY HALE, IS PREPARING TO LEAVE THE NEWS-PAPER OFFICE FOR LUNCH, A GHASTLY SCENE OCCURS IN THE SLUM AREA OF THE CITY...

I'D BETTER CALL THE COPS.



OUTSIDE HIS BUILDING, HALE HEARS A POLICE SIREN...HIS FRIEND, DETECTIVE SERGEANT POOLE, RIDING IN THE PATROL CAR, ORDERS THE DRIVER TO PULL OVER TO THE CURB...

WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO A HOMICIDE, HALE. WANT TO COME ALONG?

THANKS, SARGE, I SURE DO!



WHAT'S THE STORY, SERGEANT POOLE?

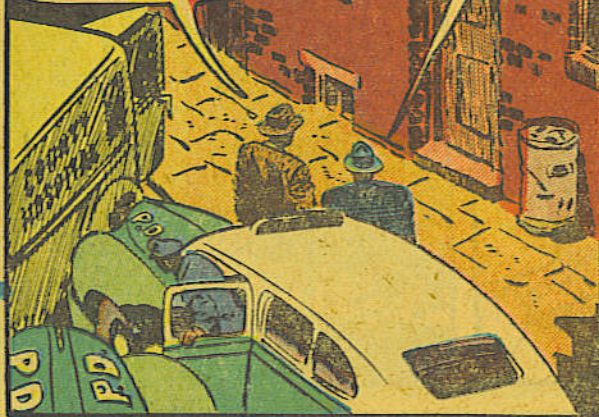
MRS. MORRISON, AN OLD LADY, WAS REPORTED STRANGLED IN HER BED, HALE.



THEY ARRIVE AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME...

THE HOMICIDE SQUAD AND MEDICAL EXAMINER ARE ALREADY ON THE JOB, HALE.

THEY WORK FAST, SERGEANT POOLE.



THE COP RINGS THE DOORBELL...

OHhhh, MORE POLICE! I'M PAMELA MORRISON. IT'S MY MOTHER WHO HAS BEEN MURDERED.

SHE DOESN'T SEEM VERY UPSET!



PAMELA LEADS THE TRIO TO A BEDROOM. THE MEDICAL EXAMINER TALKS TO SERGEANT POOLE...

THAT'S THE WAY WE FOUND THE OLD LADY. HER NECK'S BROKEN. THE MEN ARE TAKING FINGER-PRINTS NOW.



SERGEANT POOLE AND REPORTER HALE GRILL PAMELA...

WILL YOU TELL WHAT HAPPENED MISS MORRISON?

I WAS WORKING IN THE KITCHEN WHEN I HEARD SOUNDS FROM MOTHER'S ROOM. I RAN IN...AND FOUND HER... DEAD! A MAN WAS CRAWLING OUT THAT WINDOW, MR. HALE.



CAN YOU GIVE US HIS DESCRIPTION?

YES, SERGEANT... BUT I'LL NEED PROTECTION. HE SAID HE'D KILL ME IF I TALKED!

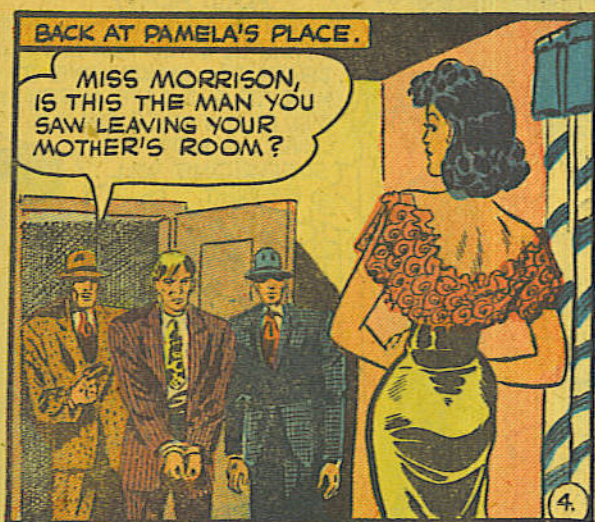
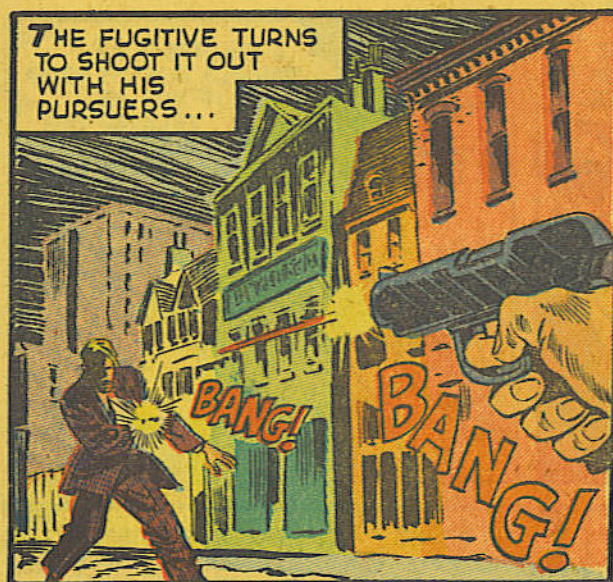


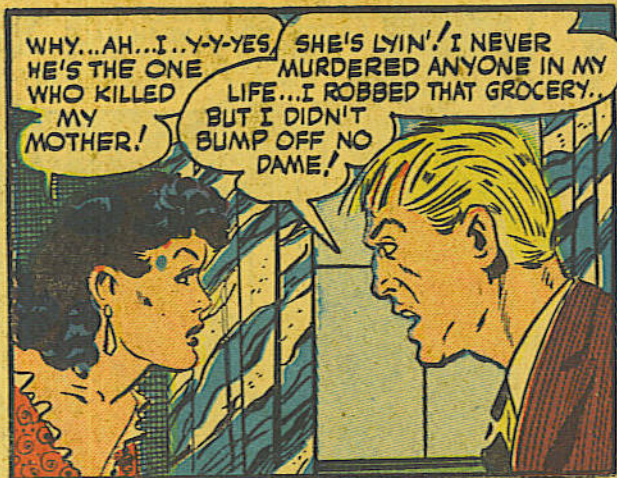
WE'LL SEE THAT YOU'RE NOT HARMED, MISS MORRISON. NOW TELL US ABOUT THE MAN.

HE WAS PART WAY OUT THE WINDOW, SO I DON'T KNOW HIS HEIGHT..HIS FACE WAS GAUNT..HIS LIPS WERE THICK... AND HIS NOSE WAS LARGE...HE WORE A PIN-STRIPE SUIT.







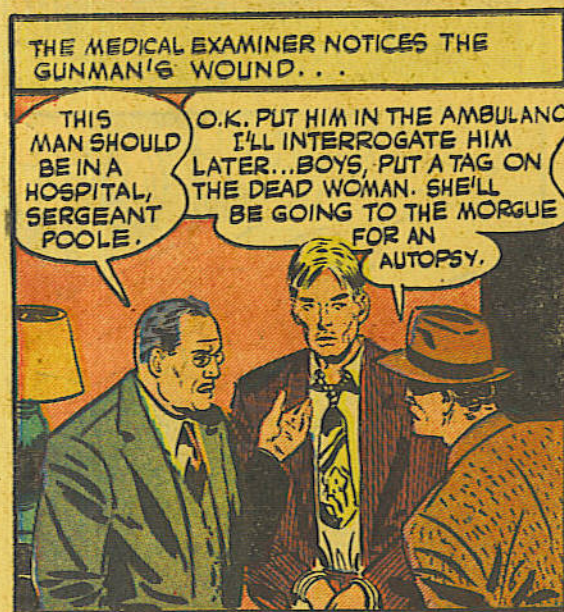


WHY...AH...I...Y-Y-YES!
HE'S THE ONE
WHO KILLED
MY
MOTHER!

SHE'S LYIN'! I NEVER
MURDERED ANYONE IN MY
LIFE...I ROBBED THAT GROCERY...
BUT I DIDN'T
BUMP OFF NO
DAME!



I BELIEVE HIM!
PAMELA DOESN'T SOUND
AS IF SHE IS
TELLING THE
TRUTH! THERE'S
SOMETHING
FISHY HERE!



THE MEDICAL EXAMINER NOTICES THE
GUNMAN'S WOUND...

THIS
MAN SHOULD
BE IN A
HOSPITAL,
SERGEANT
POOLE.

O.K. PUT HIM IN THE AMBULANCE.
I'LL INTERROGATE HIM
LATER...BOYS, PUT A TAG ON
THE DEAD WOMAN. SHE'LL
BE GOING TO THE MORGUE
FOR AN
AUTOPSY.



YOU DON'T
NEED A
BODYGUARD

NO, I'M GOING TO STAY
HERE, SARGE. I WANT TO
SPEAK TO PAMELA.

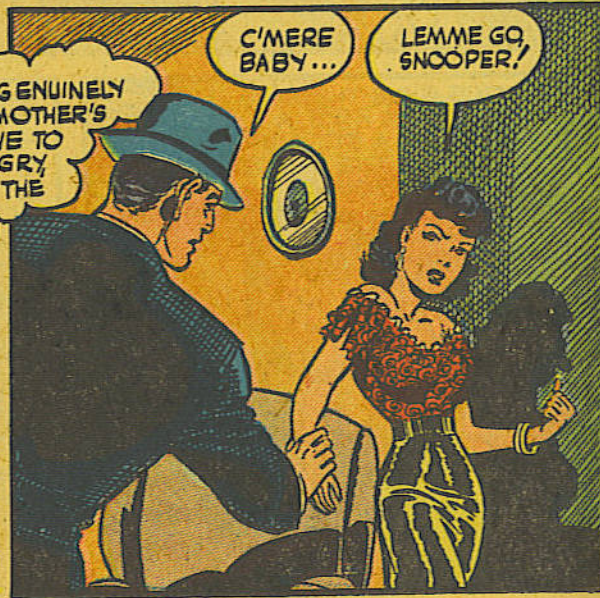
NOW THAT WE'VE
GOT THE SUSPECT.
DON'T LEAVE TOWN,
THOUGH. I HAVE TO
QUESTION
YOU
FURTHER.
COMING
HALE?



AFTER THE COPS LEAVE...

I SUSPECT
FOUL PLAY!

I WONDER IF PAMELA IS GENUINELY
REMORSEFUL OVER HER MOTHER'S
DEATH. I'LL MAKE LOVE TO
HER. IF SHE GETS ANGRY,
I'LL KNOW SHE'S ON THE
LEVEL. IF NOT, MY
SUSPICIONS WILL
BE RIGHT.

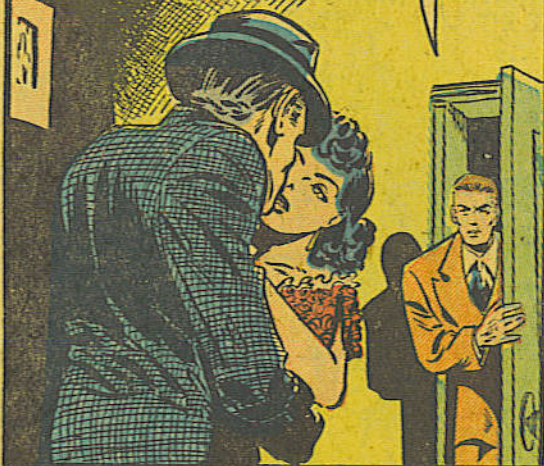


C'MERE
BABY...

LEMME GO
SNOOPER!

AS HALE PULLS
THE GIRL TO
HIM, THE DOOR
OPENS ...

PAMELA!
CHEATING ON ME,
HUH!

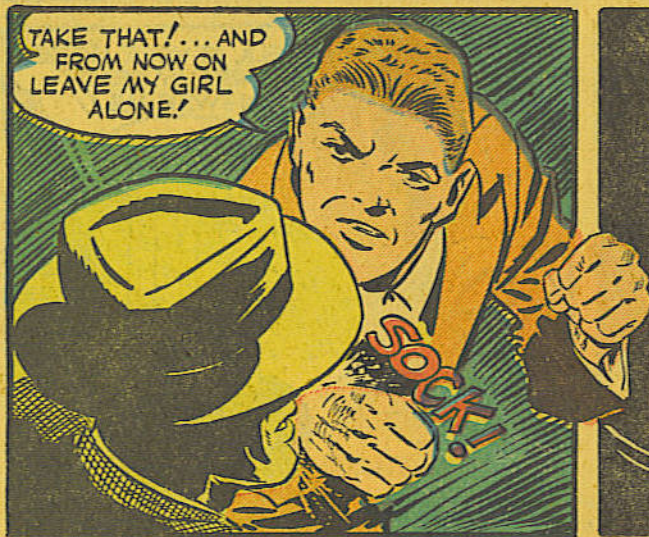


ROSCOE!... DARLING,
THIS LUG PUSHED
HIMSELF ON
ME!

OH, HE DID, DID
HE? WELL, I'LL FIX
HIM!



TAKE THAT!... AND
FROM NOW ON
LEAVE MY GIRL
ALONE!



THAT OUGHT TO
PUT YOU ON ICE
FOR AWHILE,
ROSCOE.

CRACK!



YOU CAN'T DO THAT
TO MY BOYFRIEND
AND GET AWAY
WITH IT!



I'LL KILL
YOU, HALE!

OH, YEAH?



THE REPORTER GRABS PAMELA'S WRIST AND TWISTS IT...

OH, NO YOU WON'T, BABY!

OWWW-W!!
LET GO - YOU'RE HURTING ME!



ROSCOE REVIVES...

OHHH!
WHAT HIT ME...?

I DID, BROTHER. BEHAVE YOURSELF AND ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS... HOW COME YOU HAVE FREE ENTRY TO THIS HOUSE?



I'M PAMELA'S FIANCE. I COME AND GO AS I PLEASE. WHAT BUSINESS IS IT OF YOURS?

I'M RAY HALE, REPORTER ON THE "CLARION". PAMELA'S MOTHER HAS APPARENTLY BEEN MURDERED. DID YOU KILL HER?



PAMELA, IS YOUR MOTHER REALLY DEAD? ANSWER ME !!

Y-Y-YES, ROSCOE.



PAMELA TELLS HER BOYFRIEND THE SAME STORY SHE TOLD HALE AND THE POLICE.

DID YOU KILL HER FOR THE INSURANCE?

**NO, ROSCOE!
NO!**



A BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS FROM THE TWO MEN CAUSES PAMELA TO CRY. SHE BREAKS DOWN AND CONFESSES THE TRUTH...

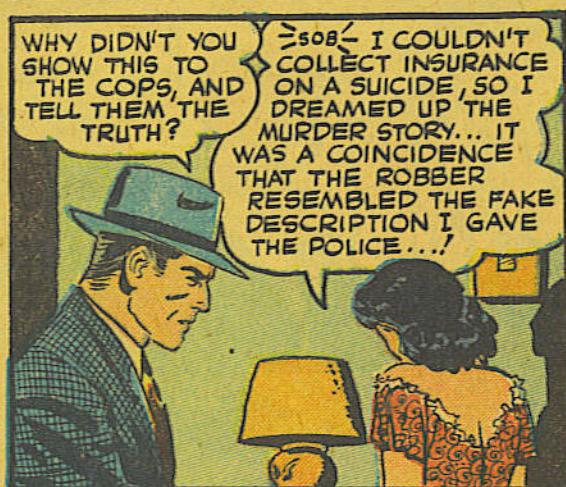
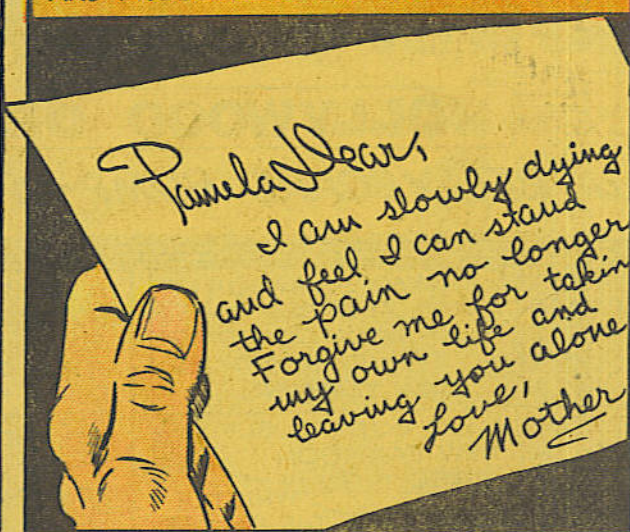
MOTHER COMMITTED SUICIDE... SHE... SHE LEFT A NOTE.

WHERE IS IT? SHOW IT TO US...





THE GIRL GOES INTO THE NEXT ROOM
AND PRODUCES A PIECE OF PAPER ...



DAN TURNER.

HOLLYWOOD DETECTIVE

in *"BELLYBOARD BUMP-OFF!"* by ROBERT LESLIE BELLEM

DIRECTOR SKINNY SWANSON OF PARAGON PIX, AND OLD TIME STAR OF SLAPSTICK COMEDIES, IS HAVING A SNIFFER WITH HIS PAL, DAN TURNER...

SHERLOCK, I'VE GOT TROUBLE WITH THE NEW PARAGON FARCE I'M DIRECTING!

WHISTLE THE PATTERN, PAL!



I'M USING SOME OLD SLAPSTICK ROUTINES FOR MY STAR, CARY GREGG...AND HE'S TURNED YELLOW ON ME! HE'S SO SCARED HE'LL GET HURT, THAT HE'S LOUSING UP THE FOOTAGE!

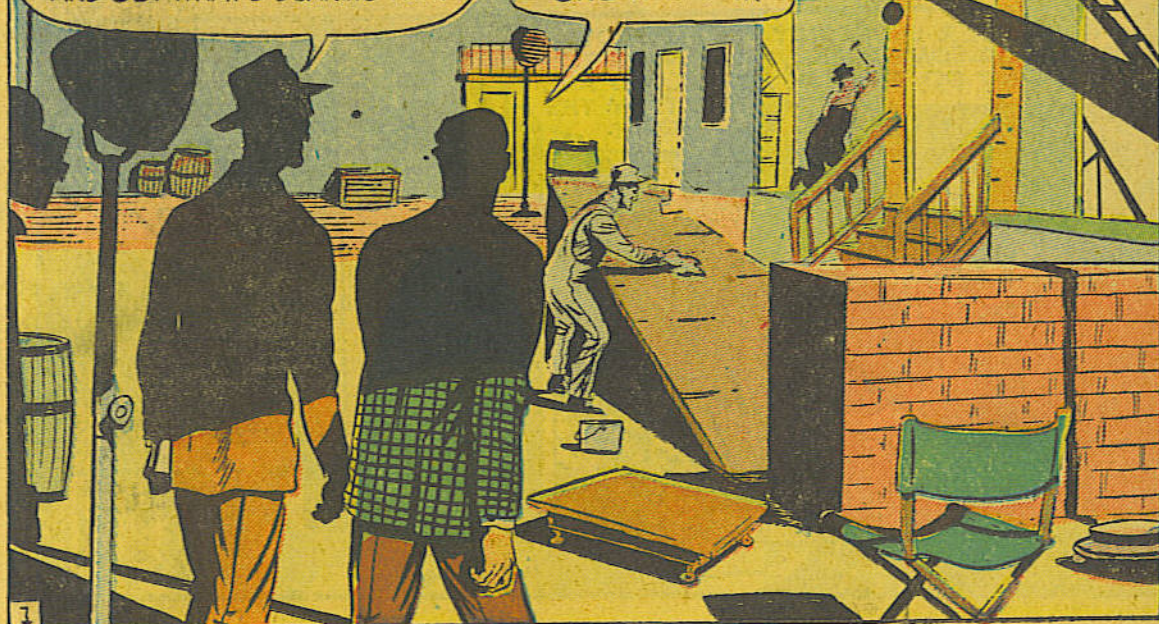
THAT'S ODD! I ALWAYS FIGURED GREGG WAS A FEARLESS HERO IN REAL LIFE AS WELL AS REEL LIFE!



SWANSON AND TURNER CONTINUE THEIR TALK ON A SOUND STAGE SET...

YOU'RE RIGHT, HAWKSHAW, CARY GREGG HAS ALWAYS BEEN BRAVE UNTIL NOW! YOU FIND OUT WHAT'S SCARING HIM.

SOUNDS LIKE A JOB FOR A PSYCHOANALYST, INSTEAD OF A SNOOP, BUT I'LL GIVE IT A TRY!



LATER, AS TURNER ANKLES TOWARD
CARY GREGG'S DRESSING ROOM...

PLEASE, CARY,
YOU'RE
HURTING ME!

YOU'LL TAKE THE
FIRST DRINK, OR
I'LL BREAK
YOUR NECK!

HEY!
WHAT'S THIS-?

★
CARY
GREGG

TURNER BARGES INTO THE ROOM...

DRINK, ELLEN, TO
PROVE YOU DIDN'T GIFT
ME WITH A PINT OF
POISONED HOCH!

CRIPES, THAT'S
ELLEN MARSH HE'S
MAULING! SHE'S NOT
ONLY HIS LEADING
LADY, BUT HIS
SWEETHEART! WHAT
GOES ON HERE?

LAY OFF, GREGG... BEFORE
I LOAD YOU WITH LUMPS!

OH!

ELLEN'S IN LOVE WITH YOU!
AND GOING TO MARRY YOU!
SHAME ON YOU FOR
SUSPECTING HER OF
TRYING TO POISON YOU!

I SUSPECT
EVERYBODY!
THERE'S
MURDER HANGING
OVER MY HEAD!

CARY, YOU'RE OUT
OF YOUR MIND...
I'M LEAVING!

I DON'T
BLAME
YOU,
TUTZ!

MAYBE I AM GOING NUTS!
BUT I KEEP HEARING
ANONYMOUS DEATH THREATS
ON THE PHONE!

THAT'S BAD. BUT
DON'T ACCUSE YOUR
FIANCÉE. BE LOGICAL
CHUM, AND TELL ME IF
YOU'VE GOT ENEMIES!

THE ONLY TWO PEOPLE WHO REALLY HATE ME ARE LEW VARNUM, THE PROP MAN, AND NANCY O'DARE... THE STUNT WOMAN WHO DOUBLES FOR ELLEN MARSH IN THIS OPUS. THERE MAY BE OTHERS...

WELL, QUIT JITTERING WHILE I MAKE LIKE A PRIVATE EYE!



TURNER INTERVIEWS LEW VARNUM...

WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT YOU PACKING A GRUDGE AGAINST CARY GREGG?

THAT **HEEL!** I SANK MY BANKROLL IN AN OIL WELL HE TOUTED...AND I NEVER GOT BACK A SINGLE DIME!



IS THAT WHY YOU'VE BEEN THREATENING TO CROAK HIM?

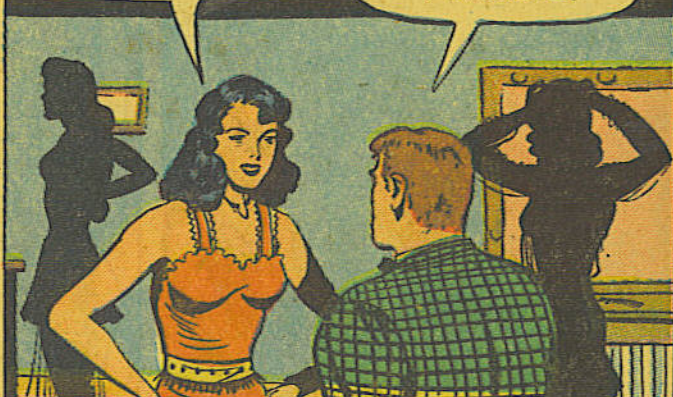
DON'T BE **STUPID!** I WOULDN'T LIFT A FINGER TO HARM HIM! I LOST MY MONEY BUT NOT MY MIND!



NEXT, DAN TURNER VISITS BIG, BEAUTIFUL NANCY O'DARE IN THE GIRL'S DRESSING ROOM.

PICKLE ME IN BRINE, IF IT ISN'T **HANDSOME DAN**, THE DEMON DICK!

SALUTATIONS, SUGAR! COULD I SEE YOU ALONE A MINUTE?



WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? IF IT'S KISSES...NIX DURING WORKING HOURS!

THIS IS BUSINESS, BABE. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FEUD WITH CARY GREGG.



I'D LIKE TO TWIST THAT TWIRP INTO A PRETZEL! HE GOT ME TO INVEST IN A PHONY OIL WELL, AND I LOST MY SHIRT!

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT STUCK, BUT I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN MAKING FOOLISH THREATS.



TURNER REPORTS TO SKINNY SWANSON...

...SO YOU SEE... THE ONLY ONES HATING GREGG ARE THE SUCKERS WHO LOST DOUGH IN AN OIL WELL HE RECOMMENDED.

BUT GOLLY, HE LOST MORE THAN THEY DID! IT WIPED ME OUT, TOO. I HEADED THE DRILLING SYNDICATE!



I'LL KEEP A GLIM ON HIM TO SEE THAT NOBODY TRIES TO KNOCK HIM OFF.

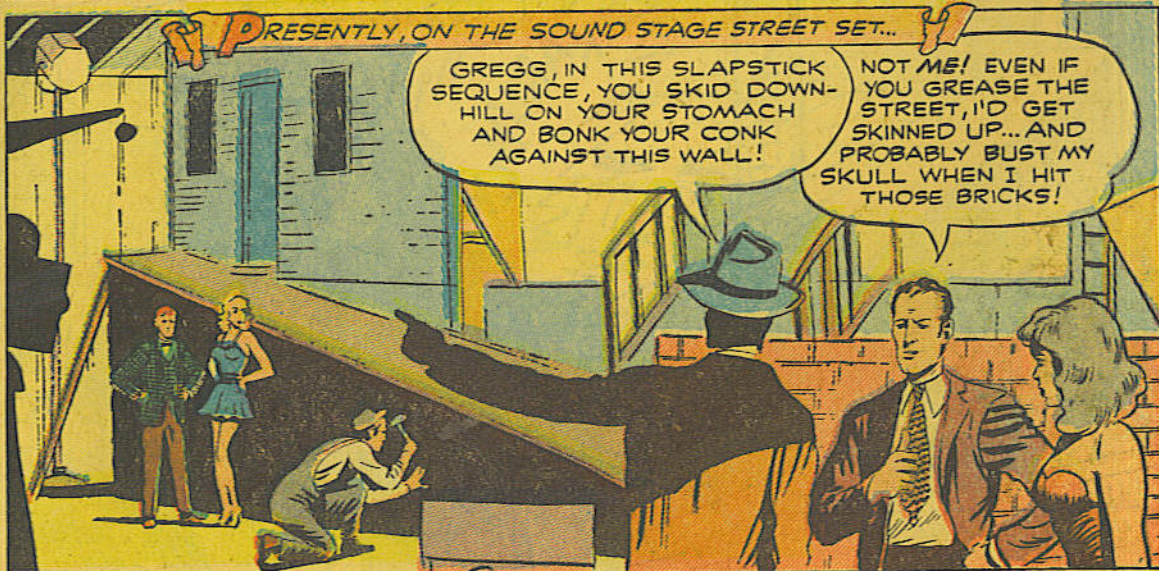
NUTS! HE PROBABLY JUST IMAGINED THOSE THREATS. BUT I HOPE HE'S IN SHAPE FOR THIS SCENE I'M ABOUT TO SHOOT.



PRESENTLY, ON THE SOUND STAGE STREET SET...

GREGG, IN THIS SLAPSTICK SEQUENCE, YOU SKID DOWN-HILL ON YOUR STOMACH AND BONK YOUR CONK AGAINST THIS WALL!

NOT ME! EVEN IF YOU GREASE THE STREET, I'D GET SKINNED UP... AND PROBABLY BUST MY SKULL WHEN I HIT THOSE BRICKS!



THE FAKE BRICKS ARE PAINTED ON CANVAS OVER THICK SOFT PADDING... SEE? YOU CAN'T GET HURT!

I... I'M SCARED JUST THE SAME!



FOR THE SLIDE, YOU'LL RIDE DOWNHILL ON THE BELLYBOARD JUST LIKE MECHANICS USE TO GET UNDER A JALOPY!

BUT SOMETHING MIGHT GO WRONG... I NEVER TRAINED IN SLAPSTICK LIKE YOU DID!



AW, FOR LAND'S SAKE! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE AND PROVE IT ISN'T DANGEROUS!

THIS WAS HOW I DID IT HUNDREDS OF TIMES IN THE OLD SILENT DAYS!

SWANSON BLAMS DOWNHILL ON THE BELLYBOARD... AND SMACKS HEAD-ON INTO THE PADDED WALL!

GOSH, THAT'S REALISTIC!

IT GIVES ME THE SHUDDERS!

KARUNCH

NANCY O'DARE SPRINTS DOWN-HILL...

SOMETHING'S WRONG!
SKINNY ISN'T GETTING UP!
HE'S HURT!

HIS NECK'S BROKEN!
HE'S DEAD!

CARY GREGG MAKES AN ASTOUNDING ACCUSATION...

BUT HOW COULD HE BE KILLED AGAINST A PADDED WALL?

MAYBE YOU BROKE HIS NECK WHEN YOU PICKED HIM UP IN YOUR ARMS!



TAKE THAT BACK, YOU CREEP, OR I'LL TEAR YOU APART!

AR-RGH...QUIT... YOU'RE ONLY PROVING YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH STRENGTH TO KILL A MAN!



NANCY, STOP!

YEAH! LAY OFF HIM!

BUT I DIDN'T KILL SKINNY! I LOVED HIM!

SURE, AND HE JILTED YOU! THAT WAS YOUR MURDER MOTIVE!



TURNER UNCOVERS THE KILL METHOD...

QUIET, EVERYBODY! HERE'S WHAT BUMPED SWANSON... A **STEEL PLATE** BEHIND THE CANVAS INSTEAD OF **SOFT PADDING**! THAT MAKES IT PREMEDITATED CROAKERY!



THEN **YOU'RE GUILTY, VARNUM!** AS PROP MAN, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD REPLACE THE PADDING WITH SHEET STEEL!

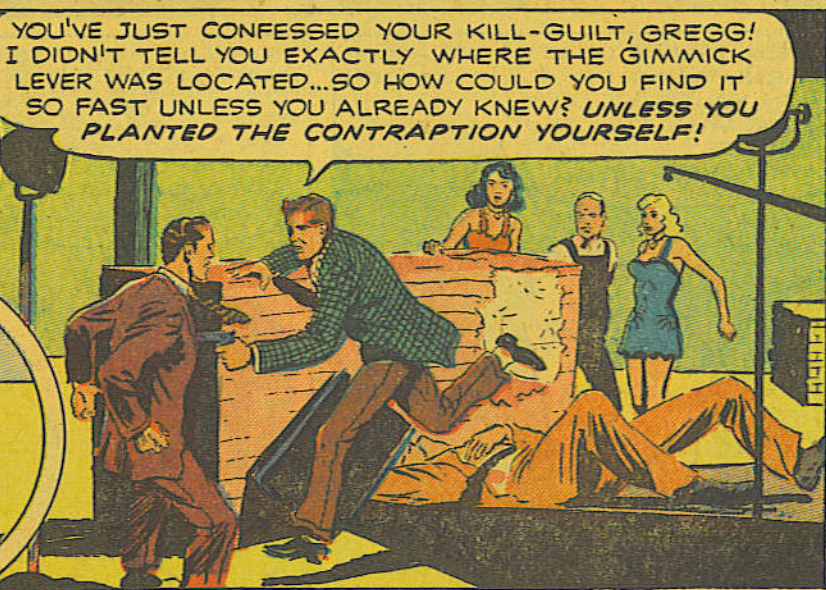
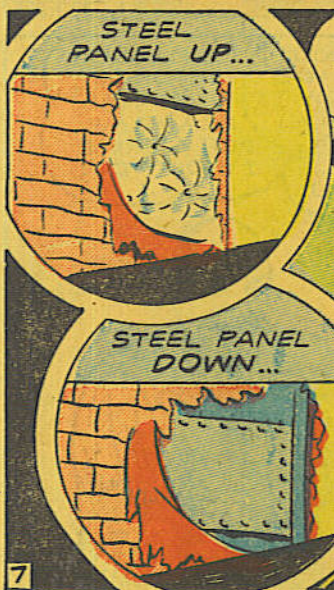
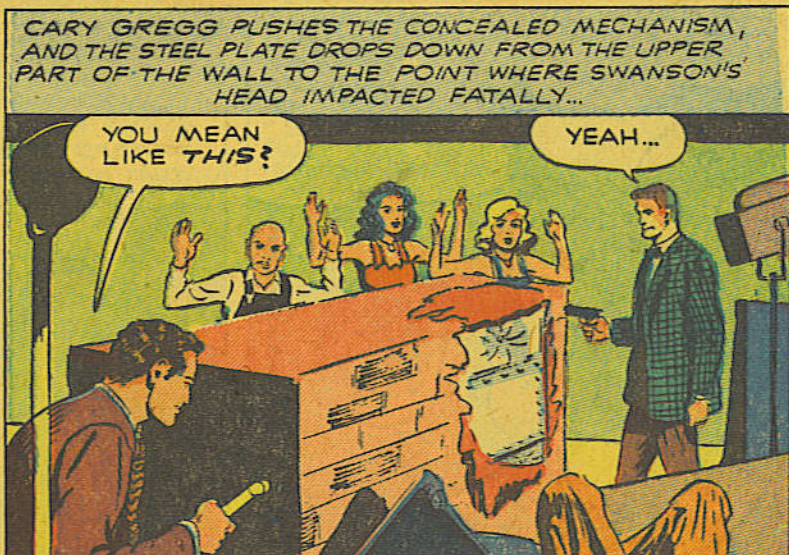
IT'S A **LIE!** I WOULDN'T KILL SKINNY!



YOU DIDN'T INTEND TO KILL SKINNY...YOUR SCHEME WAS TO MURDER **ME!** SKINNY RODE THE BELLYBOARD IN MY PLACE...AND DIED INSTEAD OF ME! PUT DOWN THAT GUN, YOU **MURDERER!**

I'LL PLUG YOU BEFORE I LET YOU FRAME ME FOR A CRIME I DIDN'T DO!





YOU WERE BANKRUPTED BY SKINNY SWANSON'S OIL WELL SYNDICATE, SO YOU CROAKED HIM FOR REVENGE FIRST YOU INSTALLED THE SLIDING PANEL IN THE PADDED WALL!

N-NO!
NO, I...



THEN YOU PRETENDED TO GET TELEPHONE THREATS. EVEN YOUR FEAR OF THE BELLYBOARD SCENE WAS FAKED!

YOU C-CAN'T PROVE...



YOU JOBBED SWANSON INTO DEMONSTRATING HOW TO MAKE THE COMEDY SLIDE... AND YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE STANDING NEAR THE WALL TO WORK THE LEVER SO HE WOULD SMASH HIS NOGGIN AGAINST HIDDEN STEEL INSTEAD OF SOFT PADDING!



TO MAKE IT WORSE, YOU EVEN TRIED TO SWITCH SUSPICION TO VARNUM AND NANCY O'DARE. IT'S A WONDER YOU DIDN'T ALSO TRY TO DOUBLE-CROSS YOUR SWEETIE, ELLEN MARSH!

CURSE YOU! YOU EVEN TRICKED ME INTO PUTTING MY FINGER PRINTS ON THE LEVER... SO I MAY AS WELL CONFESS!



TURNER'S FRIEND, DAVE DONALDSON OF THE HOMICIDE SQUAD, ARRIVES...

SOMEBODY PHONED ME ABOUT A KILL!

YEAH, AND HERE'S THE KILLER READY TO BE GASED.



COME ON, KIDS. YOU EACH LOST A SWEETIE, BUT UNCLE DAN'LL HELP YOU FORGET YOUR GRIEF BY TAKING YOU BOTH OUT TO ONE OF THE PLUSH GLITTER JOINTS ON SUNSET STRIP.

THAT'S JUST WONDERFUL!



READ DAN TURNER IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!...

GAIL FORD - GIRL FRIDAY-

by Pierre Charpentier

THE HOTEL REXALTON, THE SWANKIEST HOSTELRY IN TOWN, IS CROWDED WITH CELEBRITIES, CHIEF OF WHOM IS IRENE SWERDNA, A GREAT BEAUTY, JUST ARRIVED FROM EUROPE. A FEW DAYS AFTER SHE HAS CHECKED IN, THE ROOM CLERK RECEIVES A FRANTIC CALL...

in the Case of
"THE HIDDEN MURDER"

NEVER A CHANCE TO REST! - THERE'S THE PHONE AGAIN -

YES, MADAME SWERDNA - WHAT?
WHAT?

THE ROOM CLERK AND THE HOUSE DETECTIVE HASTEN UPSTAIRS, AND...

THIS IS JUST THE WAY I FOUND HER!

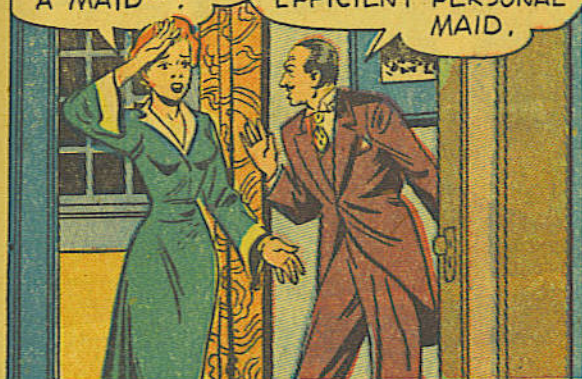
OH, PLEASE, COME UP RIGHT AWAY! MY MAID, MARY, HAS JUST COMMITTED SUICIDE! SHE HUNG HERSELF!

THAT DAME'S DEAD, ALL RIGHT. THIS IS OUT OF MY HANDS NOW. CALL UP THE HOMICIDE BUREAU. IT'S INSPECTOR MADSON'S BABY FROM HERE ON IN -

DESPITE THE TRAGEDY, IRENE SWERDNA BEWAILS HER OWN TROUBLES. .

WHAT'LL I DO--?
I CANNOT GET
ALONG WITHOUT
A MAID--!

DON'T WORRY, MA'AM.
THE HOTEL WILL
ASSIGN TO YOU AN
EFFICIENT PERSONAL
MAID.



LATER, THE INSPECTOR IS IN HIS OFFICE WITH HIS SECRETARY WHEN AN EXPECTED PHONE CALL COMES...

WELL--! THE MEDICAL EXAMINER
JUST CALLED. THAT MAID DIED OF
POISON INJECTED IN HER NECK.
SHE WAS HANGED AFTER SHE
WAS ALREADY DEAD!



THE HOTEL CLERK
GETS A CALL...

GOOD! I AM
SENDING ONE TO
YOU, WHEN SHE
GETS THERE,
GIVE HER AN
OUTFIT AND
SHE'LL REPORT
TO THE SWERDNA
SUITE -

HELLO, INSPECTOR.
NO, WE HAVEN'T
SENT A MAID UP
THERE YET--



WELL, GAIL, BELIEVE
IT OR NOT, YOU'RE
A HOTEL MAID!

OKAY, BOSS.
BEING A
DOMESTIC SER-
VANT IS NEW TO
ME, BUT I'LL DO
THE BEST I CAN



LATER, GAIL REPORTS FOR WORK...

I DON'T LIKE AMERICAN SERVANTS
BUT I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO PUT
UP WITH YOU.

I'LL TRY MY BEST
TO PLEASE YOU, MA'AM.



THAT EVENING, A CALLER ARRIVES...

'LO, IRENE.
READY?

YES, REGGIE,
LET'S GO.



MUCH LATER, IRENE AND REGGIE RETURN TO THE HOTEL, PLASTERED TO THE GILLS...

CAN I HELP YOU, MA'AM?

YESH - PUT ME TO BED.



AS IRENE PASSES OUT, GAIL NOTICES HER RING...

THAT'S A STRANGE LOOKING RING...



GAIL TAKES THE RING AS REGGIE LURCHES IN...

HEY - WHAT - HIC - ARE YOU DOING?

OH!

AS SHE EXAMINES IT CLOSELY, A SHARP NEEDLE SNAPS OUT...

OH-OH! THAT NEARLY STUCK ME! SAY - THE INSPECTOR SHOULD SEE THIS!



REGGIE LOCKS THE DOOR AND YELLS-

GIVE ME THAT RING! YOU'RE TOO NOSEY. LET'S HAVE IT!

NOTHING DOING!



LET ME PASS, YOU DRUNKEN CROOK!



HOW'LL I GET OUT
OF THIS PLACE - ?

C'MON 'ERE, YOU!

THE WINDOW LOOKS LIKE
THE ONLY POSSIBLE WAY -

HE'S COMING OUT! - IF I CAN JUST
JUMP TO THAT FIRE ESCAPE OVER
THERE - HE'S TOO DRUNK TO FOLLOW -

GAIL MAKES A FLYING LEAP ACROSS
THE AREAWAY TO SAFETY...

SMART, AREN'T
YOU? WELL, YOU
WON'T GET AWAY.
I'LL CATCH YOU YET!

GOSH - I
HOPE I
MAKE IT!

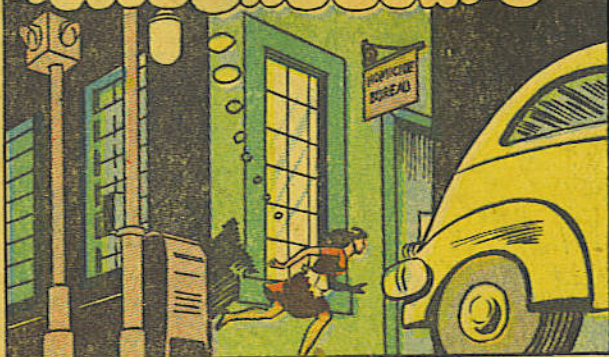
SHE SPEEDS DOWN THE
FIRE ESCAPE TO THE STREET...

POLICE HEADQUARTERS -
STEP ON IT, CABBY!
I'M ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS
-AND IT'S IMPORTANT!

YES'M-

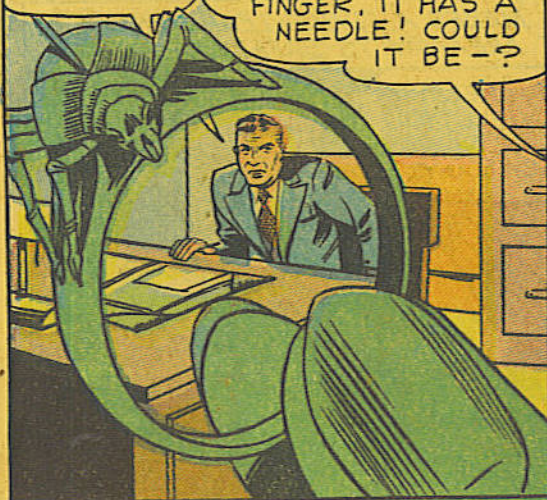


THE INSPECTOR'S LIGHT IS ON - HOPE
HE'S IN AT THIS UNEARTHLY HOUR!



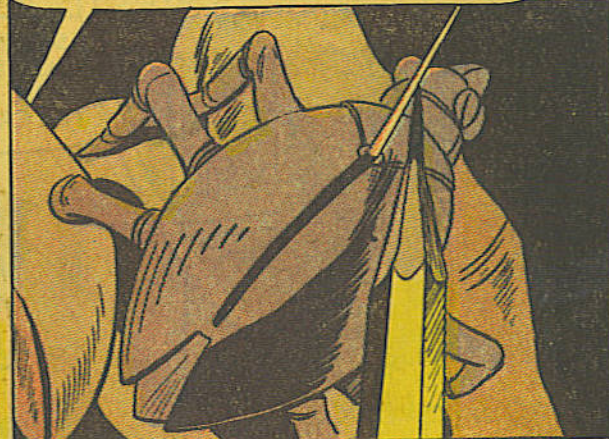
WHY, GAIL -
WHAT'S UP?

LOOK AT THIS RING -
I TOOK OFF SWERDNA'S
FINGER. IT HAS A
NEEDLE! COULD
IT BE -?



WHEN GAIL HAS TOLD HER STORY ...

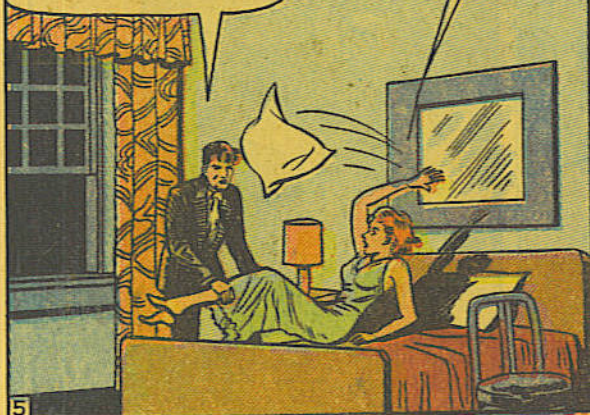
YES - IT COULD BE THE POISON TOOL.
I'LL HAVE IT EXAMINED IMMEDIATELY.
BUT MEANWHILE, LET'S GO - WE'LL
GRAB THEM BEFORE THEY SCRAM -



AT THAT TIME, AT THE HOTEL ...

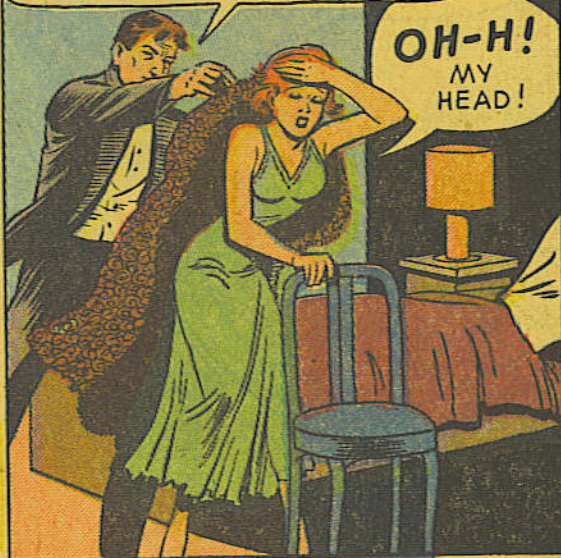
COME ON, IRENE, WAKE
UP! THE COPS ARE WISE!
THAT GIRL GOT AWAY
WITH YOUR RING. I BET
SHE WAS PLANTED HERE
BY THE POLICE!

GO 'WAY!
LEMMIE
SLEEP!

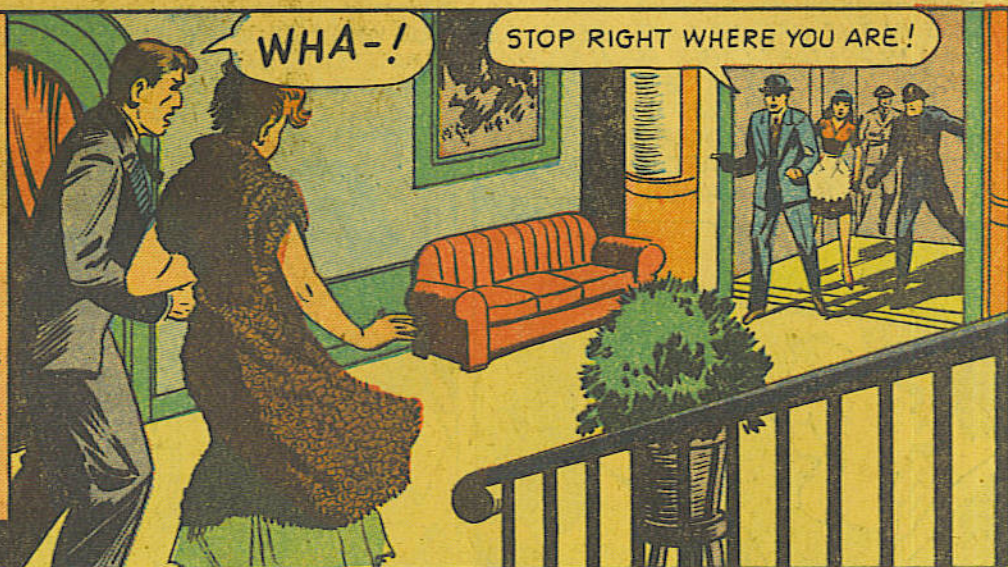


NO TIME TO DRESS! PUT ON THIS
COAT, WE'RE GETTING OUT!

OH-H!
MY
HEAD!



REGGIE
PILOTS
HIS
UNSTEADY
COMPANION
ACROSS
THE
HOTEL
LOBBY,
JUST AS
THE
INSPECTOR
AND HIS
COPS COME
IN THE
DOOR...



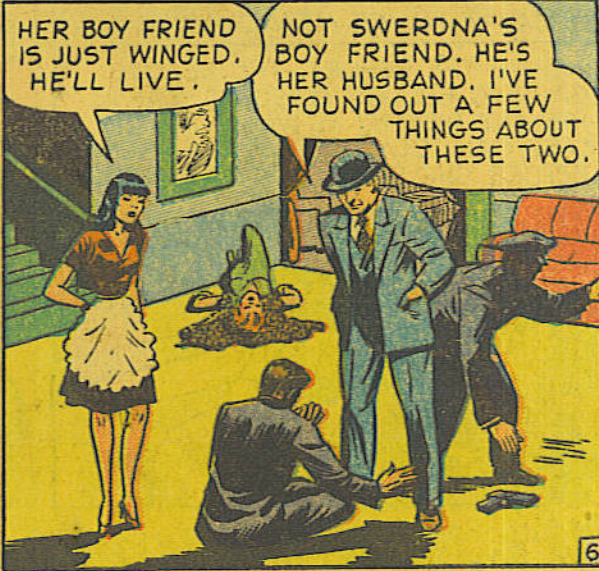
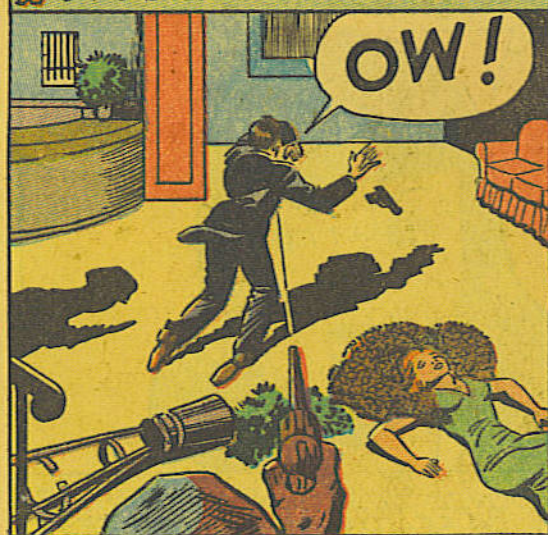
REGGIE DROPS IRENE AND RUNS...



THE FUGITIVE DRAWS A GUN, AND...



A COP'S BULLET DROPS REGGIE...



I WAS IN THE OFFICE LATE BECAUSE OF AN IMPORTANT CABLE FROM SCOTLAND YARD IN LONDON THAT EXPLAINS EVERYTHING. SHE WAS A NOTORIOUS SWINDLER ON THE OTHER SIDE, SPELL "SWERDNA" BACKWARDS, AND YOU HAVE HER REAL NAME.



BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT POOR GAL WHO WAS HUNG?

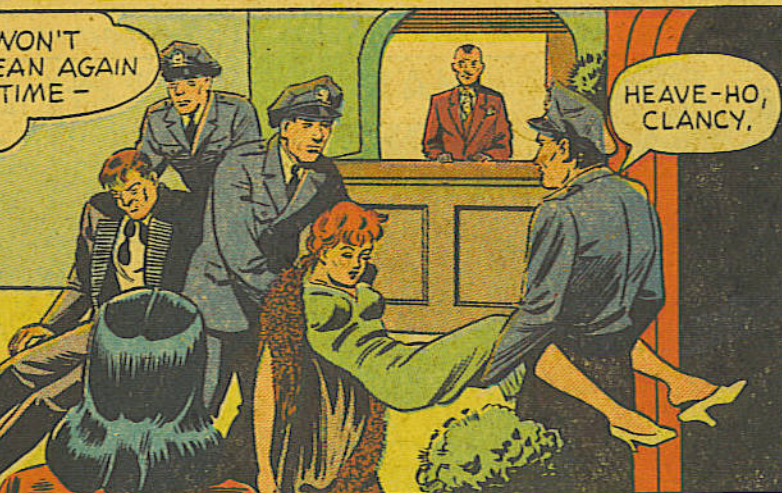


THE MAID WHO CROSSED THE ATLANTIC WITH HER WAS A "YARD" AGENT. THEY MUST HAVE FOUND THAT OUT AND BUMPED HER.



THE LIMP FORMS OF THE TWO CROOKS ARE REMOVED FROM THE HOTEL LOBBY...

THOSE TWO WON'T CROSS THE OCEAN AGAIN FOR A LONG TIME - IF AT ALL!



HEAVE-HO, CLANCY.

BACK AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

HERE'S THE REPORT. THE NEEDLE CARRIED ENOUGH POISON TO CAUSE INSTANT DEATH! IT WAS A QUICK CASE, GAIL. GLAD WE GOT THAT WOMAN BEFORE SHE SPOTTED YOU AS A COP.



HEAVENS, INSPECTOR, I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO JUMP FROM THAT FIRE ESCAPE?! LUCKY THING YOU MADE

ME TAKE GYMNASTIC LESSONS AT THE POLICE ACADEMY!



WELL, READERS, WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED THIS ISSUE OF **CRIME SMASHERS**. WRITE AND TELL US WHICH FEATURE YOU LIKED BEST.